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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/016,640	10/30/2001	Dana Eagles	93007-2002	4069

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EXAMINER

WRIGHT, ANDREW D

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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3617

DATE MAILED: 01/26/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/016,640

Applicant(s)

EAGLES, DANA

Examiner

Andrew Wright

Art Unit

3617

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 04 November 2003.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-21 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 12-21 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1 and 9-11 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 2-8 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application) since a specific reference was included in the first sentence of the specification or in an Application Data Sheet. 37 CFR 1.78.
a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121 since a specific reference was included in the first sentence of the specification or in an Application Data Sheet. 37 CFR 1.78.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____ 6) ☐ Other:

DETAILED ACTION

Drawings

1. The drawings were received on 11/7/03. These drawings are acceptable.

Claim Objections

2. Claim 1 is objected to. Claim 1 is an apparatus claim that recites "aligning said first and second upright members". This recitation appears to be a method step. For examination purposes it will be assume that the members are aligned. Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

3. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

4. Claims 1 and 9-11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Reimers (US 6,550,410). Reimers shows a fluid containment vessel. The vessel comprises an elongate flexible tubular structure with a circumference and first and second ends (figures 1A and 1B and abstract). The tubular structure comprises three fabric segments (112, 113, 114) that have a width that is smaller than the width of the tubular structure (figures 1A and 1B). Reimers discloses that the fabric can be rendered impervious by internal and external coating. Reimers discloses that the first and second

ends are sealed. Reimers discloses a fluid filling and emptying conduit. The vessel has an inside and an outside. Reimers discloses means for joining the segments together (figures 6A and 6B). The means for joining comprises first upright member (500) at the edge of first fabric segment and second upright member (500) at the edge of second fabric segment. The members (500) are aligned. Profile (600) is a means for filling the space between the segments. String (220) is a means for securing the members together. The tubular structure further comprises strip (210). The means for securing (i.e. string (220)) is disposed only on the inside of the combination of fabric segments and strip (210) and therefore is disposed only on the inside of the tubular structure.

5. Regarding claim 9 the length of the each segment is equal to the circumference of the tube. Regarding claim 10, the means for securing includes stitching with string (220). Regarding claim 11, string is encompassed in the broad scope of the term rope as used in the claims and understood from the specification.

Allowable Subject Matter

6. Claims 2-8 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

7. The following is a statement of reasons for the indication of allowable subject matter. The prior art does not teach or suggest the claimed combination particularly with a structure for joining flexible fabric segments comprising the recited C-shaped members.

Response to Arguments

8. Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1 and 9-11 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection. Applicant's arguments regarding the Kassinger and Soper patents are persuasive, and the 35 USC 103 rejection combining them with Reimers has not been repeated.

Conclusion

9. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. Swanson ('401) shows a fabric panel clamp. Velinsky ('310) shows a fabric fastener. Krupp ('745) shows a fabric sealing closure. Saether ('885) shows a clamp for fabric panels. Johnston ('623) shows a fabric joint. Knouse ('170) shows a fabric joint where the internal member is hex shaped (fig 6).

10. Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire **THREE MONTHS** from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within **TWO MONTHS** of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the **THREE-MONTH** shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of

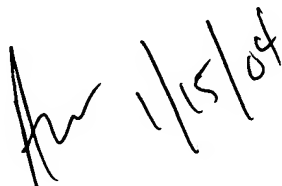
the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

11. Any inquiry concerning this communication should be directed to examiner Andrew D. Wright at telephone number (703) 308-6841. The examiner can normally be reached Monday-Friday from 9:00 - 5:00.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, S. Joe Morano, can be reached at (703) 308-0230. The fax number for official communications is 703-872-9306. The fax number directly to the examiner for unofficial communications is 703-746-3548.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist at (703) 308-1113.

Andrew D. Wright
Patent Examiner
Art Unit 3617

Handwritten signature and date 1/15/04.